

**Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary
September 10, 2009**

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Item 1 - Introductions/Agenda Review (additions/deletions): Members and guests introduced themselves.

Item 2 - Review/Approval of Meeting minutes: July minutes vote postponed allowing **Sande Brecher** to review.

Item 3 - Chair's Comments: None

Item 4 - Meeting Schedule: Co-chair **Andrew Wexler** informed the board about a proposal to reduce the number of yearly TMD Advisory Committee meetings, to a bi-monthly schedule eight to nine times per year.

Co-chair **Samantha Mazo** gave background information on the proposal stating that some committees are not required to meet monthly. Some committee members indicated that 11 meetings per year seemed more than adequate to address TMD issues. Information discussing this proposal was sent to members during the August meeting recess.

Jim Carlson stated that under the current 11 month schedule, members are allowed to miss three non-consecutive meetings; the fourth absence would be grounds for vacating the position. Also, three consecutive meeting absences are also cause for dismissal. Meeting schedule changes would impact the allowed absences.

Mr. Furgol asked if the committee were to meet eight times per year, would the number of missed absences drop to two or one. **Mr. Carlson** said once the number of meetings have been decided he would research and let everyone know the attendance policy.

Ms. Mazo asked members to give their input on the proposed meeting reduction.

Mr. Collins said we should keep to the current meeting schedule of 11 per year. He indicated that he does not believe the time spent in meetings has been unproductive.

Ms. Goudy asked if a six times per year schedule would impact the length of the meetings. **Mr. Carlson** said meetings could be extended to two hours (vs. the current 90 minutes).

Ms. Brecher said that the extra 30 minutes time could be used only when needed. She also suggested that some meetings should be used for the purpose of introductory presentations to reiterate what the Advisory Committee is working on, bringing old and new members up to speed. Her concern is continuity of discussions in the event there are issues requiring more input from the committee; fewer meetings could make it difficult. She added that the County Attorney states there must be in-person meetings and not electronic correspondence for all official Advisory Committee decisions. **Ms. Brecher** clarified that the TMD Advisory Committee is

advising not only Commuter Services staff but also the Chief and Director of DOT and the County Executive.

Sgt. Harmon said he feels that at some meetings the committee is grasping for topics and is not sure if meeting times should be reduced. He noted attendance was also an issue.

Ms. O'Steen commented on the proposed alternative meeting date worksheet saying that December should not be a month off because the committee needs to plan its budget priorities to bring before the County Executive in January. **Mr. Wexler** stated maybe the committee should meet in January as well.

Mr. Price suggested meeting nine months per year with August, November and April being the months off.

Ms. Brecher mentioned having the flexibility of meeting on the off months in case of an important issue (i.e., Leventhal's bill to eliminate the TMD) requiring the need to vote; however, scheduling a time if the committee needs to meet quickly may be difficult.

Ms. Mazo said she has felt during the short time she has been on the committee that there was some repetition to the discussions, as well as attendance issues, so scaling back may make sense. However, six times a year is not enough – nine or 10 meetings may be sufficient. She said the committee should go with a nine month schedule and plan the off months according to the County and County Executive's schedule.

Mr. Furgol made a motion that the number of meetings be reduced to nine with February, August and November as the off months. **Mr. Carlson** said the off months are workable, with the County Government having the option of meeting as far in advance as possible if there is an important issue needing attention. Also, the attendance policy for nine meetings per year may be no more than two non-consecutive absences, and only two consecutive absences would be allowed. **Ms Brecher** suggested that someone amend the motion to include extenuating circumstances. **Mr. Price** said he would be able to continue to block out the meeting room monthly.

The motion was changed to allow staff time to research the absence policy and discuss with the County Executive's office. All voted in support of the motion. Further discussion at the October meeting.

Item 5 - Updates TMD/DOT/Police/Other County Updates: **Sgt. Harmon** distributed a Monthly Accident Statistics packet, the front page of which are the yearly statistics the Department provides to show the different enforcement issues. Page One shows the total number of tickets, moving violations and warnings issued. It also gives a breakdown of law enforcement details providing a view of how traffic squad time was utilized. Page Two shows the major arterial traffic citation totals.

Sgt. Harmon explained that enforcement targets major arteries, and the highlighted numbers are where the squads spend more time at certain major arteries. Additional enforcement is used so

drivers will believe there are speed traps along those high incident areas and slow down. He explained this district has two high incident arterials that were identified by the County's Pedestrian Safety Committee: Georgia Avenue between Spring Street and Sligo Avenue, and Piney Branch Road between Flower and Carroll Avenue. Page three lists the 15 intersection locations with high collisions. Piney Branch & University and Georgia & Colesville are two of the highest incident areas.

Sgt. Harmon said they were investigating a hit and run of two women on Capital View. One of the injured women said that after waiting for a car to pass, they started across the street. Because Capital View is a very narrow street, the passed car obstructed their view of the on-coming vehicle that struck them. Referring to the packet he passed out, the only description they have is a front plastic grill that looked like a Toyota.

Sgt. Harmon said he was contacted by an insurance adjuster that located a torched car in Charles County that was stolen in Prince Georges. However, he is not sure it was the car. There also was an August 14th pedestrian fatality of a homeless man on the Rt. 29 beltway crossing about 8 pm. It is being investigated to see if alcohol was involved. **Sgt. Harmon** announced the new Pedestrian Safety video is on the County website and it would be good to show the video to the committee.

Sgt. Harmon mentioned a concern he and **Mel Tull** have about the intersection crosswalk being set back some distance at Colesville and Fenton. The problem with the crosswalk is due to the abnormal path of pedestrians causing sight problems for turning vehicles; also the ADA ramps are off-set with some dropping off six to eight inches. The County has asked the State Highway Administration to replace the crosswalk to its original location along, with the improvements already scheduled on Fenton Street from Spring Street to Sligo Avenue.

Sgt. Harmon explained that SHA moved the crosswalk because the new pedestrian annunciators had to be 15 ft. to 20 ft. away from the crosswalk. However, he thinks it was because they did not want to spend the money to remove two large light poles to facilitate the installation so they moved the crosswalk instead. Currently sight impaired pedestrians will have to find the crosswalk before crossing the street.

In light of recent accidents involving pedestrians and Metro buses in the news, **Ms. Mazo** asked **Sgt. Harmon** if they have taken any measures to prevent these types of accidents in the Silver Spring Transit Center Interim Operating Site (IOS). **Sgt. Harmon** said that particular type of enforcement is difficult; however, he stresses bus safety at monthly meetings with WMATA and Ride-On personnel at the monthly IOS Operations Meetings. He said his staff trained Ride-on supervisors in using stationary lasers so they can monitor speed in areas where Ride-On receives complaints.

Martin Atkinson said when he is in his car buses tend to pull in front of him, barely giving him enough time to stop. **Sgt. Harmon** replied that sometimes buses have to cross many lanes of traffic to make turns so they have to be assertive in making some driving maneuvers. Fortunately, resulting accidents have not been serious.

Mr. Wexler suggested having WMATA talk to the committee about their safety training because most of the high risk behavior he sees is from Metro.

Ms. Brecher asked **Sgt. Harmon** if he was aware of any laws about vehicles yielding to buses pulling out from the curb. It would be worth researching the jurisdictions that have such laws. **Mr. Wexler** said that there is a law in the District against vehicles pulling around and making right turns in front of buses.

Ms. Mazo asked if there any updates on the Senate bill currently under consideration making texting while driving illegal. **Ms. O'Steen** said the law is only enforceable if drivers are stopped for something else, and the fine is only \$20.00. **Sgt. Harmon** said the texting law is difficult to enforce because officers cannot often tell if a person is texting.

Ms Mazo asked if the Transportation Safety Committee is involved in pedestrian as well as drivers safety. **Sgt. Harmon** said that they are aware of his department efforts of enforcement, but their focus is engineering – such as traffic light times, signage and highlighted crosswalks.

Ms. O'Steen said there were no new TMPs and no new TMP Annual Reports. She does not expect any new Annual Reports until after January. Of the 43 plans from last year, none were up for renewal. She gave background information on traffic mitigation plans, explaining that in the four TMDs employers with 25 or more employees are required to file a traffic mitigation plan detailing the traffic demand measures employers are taking at their work site. These plans are due within 90 days of request. Some Silver Spring companies have not file a plan and are in violation. Once they file their plan they are also required to file an annual report detailing their plan's progress and to note if anything new traffic demand strategy was added.

Ms. O'Steen said there are mandatory components of the plan such as a point of contact and participation in the county's Annual Commuter Survey. Also companies are required to have commuter information fairs, allowing CSS personnel to meet employees and provide information about transportation programs. Technical support is provided to employers in filling out the plans.

Ms. Brecher said she would present a transportation demand management (TDM) overview at the next meeting.

Ms. Brecher passed around a listing in Gazette business newspaper of the *Advocates for Alternative Commuting Excellence* (A₂CE) award winners and thanked those who attended the awards breakfast. She announced that CSS is planning for Car Free Day on September 22nd. Car Free Day is an international event aimed at getting the community to go without a car or be 'car light' for a day. Last year was the first year Montgomery County participated. Metro has given the county permission to set up information tables at five stations: Silver Spring, Bethesda, Friendship Heights, Grovsenor and Wheaton. Letters promoting the event were sent to employers.

Mr. Carlson explained the TMD's Action Plan Worksheet. **Ms. Brecher** reformatted the document to track the progress of committee's involvement in issues such as transit service, the

Purple Line, the Bus Rapid Transit study and other relevant areas. He said he would send an email attachment so everyone can give additional input.

Ms. Brecher reported that suggestions from the committee were submitted to the White House from the County Executive as an example of Best Practices and suggestions to help local government. Some of the suggestions asked that Federal agencies be required to provide the maximum \$230.00 tax-free transit benefits to employees; also combining bike and commuter benefits and to provide more funding to local governments for TDM activities.

Ms. Brecher informed the committee about the Transportation Demand Management Professionals International conference she attended in Washington, DC. She noted the theme of the conference which was Social Media Marketing (Facebook, My Space) and welcomed the committee to let her know if they knew of any contacts who could help in this area.

Ms. Brecher said the county has submitted a car sharing Request for Proposal (RFP) that will allow car sharing companies to use county public parking spaces. Car sharing is being written into many new developer agreements as an additional demand management strategy.

Mr. Carlson announced the Friendship Heights TRiPS Commuter Store grand opening is on September 30th. The event will be attended by County Executive Leggett. The new Ride-On bus paint scheme will also be introduced. The store had a 'soft opening' and has been operational since the first week of July.

Ms. Mazo announced that she will not be able to attend the October meeting; **Mr. Wexler** will be the sole chair.

Item 6 - Other Business & Around the Room: **Mr. Price** asked when will there be an update on the Transit Center IOS.

Sgt. Harmon said that in the monthly IOS meetings it was reported that in October there will be construction along Colesville in order to install a large waterline. There are a lot of infrastructure issues that need to be done before actual construction begins.

Mr. Wexler asked **Mr. Carlson** to give briefs on the IOS meetings to the committee to keep the committee up to date.

Sgt. Harmon said that he does give IOS updates and the meetings are held at the Firehouse in the Silver Spring Regional office, 3rd floor Urban District office. The next meeting is October 6 @1:30pm.

Meeting adjourned at 9:35 am
Next meeting date: October 8, 2009

Silver Spring Transportation Management District Advisory Committee (SSTMD AC)
Attendance Sheet
Sept. 10, 2009

Voting Members (12)			
Name	Affiliation	Present	Absent
Chamber Members (3)			
Samantha Mazo	Linowes and Blocher LLP	X	
James S. Polk, Chairman	Technology Service Corporation		X
Tom Collins	Atlantech Online	X	
Citizens Advisory Board Members (3)			
Edward Furgol	Kemp Mill, Four Corners, East SS	X	
Charles Segerman, Vice Chairman	North & West Sector Plan Area		X
Andrew Wexler	CBD Resident	X	
Employers less than 50 employees (3)			
Vacant	Small Business Representative		X
Vacant	Small Business Representative		X
Cathy Wilde	Solid Waste Assoc. of N. America		X
Employers with 50 or more employees (3)			
G. Michael Price	Discovery Communications	X	
Robin Goudy	Social & Scientific Systems	X	
Vacant			
Non-Voting Members (4)			
Sandra Brecher, DOT Transit Services	DOT Director or Designee	X	
Shahriar Etemadi	M-NCPPC		X
Sergeant Thomas Harmon	Montgomery County Police	X	
Staff			
Terrie O'Steen	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Nakengi Byrd	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Jim Carlson	DOT, Commuter Services	X	
Guests			
Martin Atkinson (Confirmation Pending)	M&T Bank	X	
Rukiyat Gilbert (Confirmation Pending)	Southern Management Corp.	X	
Everton Latty (Confirmation Pending)	iDeal Decisions, Inc.	X	

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